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# NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW.

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ART. I. — *The Letters and Works of* LADY MARY WORTLEY MONTAGU. Edited by her Great-Grandson, LORD WHARNCLIFFE. Third Edition, with Additions and Corrections derived from the Original Manuscripts, Illustrative Notes, and a New Memoir. By W. MOY THOMAS. London: Henry G. Bohn. 1861. 2 vols. 8vo.

THE desire to know something of the private life of a writer who has greatly pleased or instructed us is insatiable. Memoir after memoir of the same person is welcomed without any apparent diminution of the original interest. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, the third edition of whose Letters has been lately issued from the London press, is a case in point. The first memoir which appeared after her death was imperfect and of doubtful authenticity. That of Lord Wharncliffe, published almost a century later, though fragmentary, is much more satisfactory. Its manifest purpose was to refute the calumnies then in circulation about Lady Mary, and in this it was eminently successful. It also exposes many misstatements of Mr. Dallaway, her former biographer. The memoir by Mr. W. Moy Thomas, affixed to the latest edition of her Works, differs from Lord Wharncliffe's mainly in correcting a few misconceptions, and in offering new views in relation to Lady Mary's letters. These are now compiled from the original manuscripts for the first time, and it is on this account that the new publication is specially valuable. The letters in

Lord Wharnccliffe's collection were copied from that of Mr. Dallaway, who had taken the liberty of suppressing portions, and interpolating sentences, to satisfy his own sense of propriety. In connection with the sketch by Mr. Thomas we have Lady Louisa Stuart's "Introductory Anecdotes," also included in Lord Wharnccliffe's edition. These are very entertaining, and throw more light upon the manners of the age and Lady Mary's peculiarities than the memoir itself. The latter appears rather meagre, when compared with the full and gossiping biographies of the present day. Still there is much to interest even those most familiar with the subject of the memoir and the times in which she lived. The best and clearest idea of her is gained, however, from her own letters.

Lady Mary Pierrepont was the eldest daughter of Evelyn, Lord Dorchester (afterward Duke of Kingston), and of Lady Mary Fielding, a cousin of the novelist. She was born at Thoresby in 1690, and when she was only four years old her mother died. Her father, though a man of the world and a voluptuary, was very proud of his child's beauty and precocity, and in her eighth year he nominated her for the ruling toast at the Kit-Kat Club, which Macaulay describes as "a society in which were collected all the various talents and accomplishments which then gave lustre to the Whig party." It was a custom of the club to elect yearly some beautiful woman for the reigning toast, and the members objected to the Duke's nomination, upon the ground that their rules forbade the election of any lady they had not all seen. To overthrow this objection, her father immediately sent his orders home, directing that she should be gayly dressed, and brought to the tavern. Her archness delighted the gentlemen as much as her beauty, and she was unanimously elected. As she afterward declared, this was the proudest hour of her life, for she was petted by statesmen, poets, and wits; her health was drunk, and her name was engraved upon a drinking-glass. Subsequently the Duke presented her picture to the club.

The hopes excited by her childhood were not doomed to be disappointed. She had naturally an intense love of knowledge, and a tenacious memory, and, passing most of her time

in retirement at Thoresby, she was able to give uninterrupted attention to her books. Her talents were undoubtedly great ; still there is no doubt that she owed much of the quick analysis and command of language, which rendered her the most brilliant woman of her day, to the years thus passed in reading and reflection. Her studies, it is true, were desultory, but her acquirements were very remarkable, if we consider the low standard of female education at a time when few women could write their own language with either elegance or correctness.

When Lady Mary was twenty years old, she translated the *Enchiridion* of Epictetus, which she sent to Bishop Burnet, her warm friend and adviser, for his inspection. It was accompanied by a charming letter, in which she speaks of the translation as the work of one week of her solitude. She deprecates the low tone of culture among women, and adds :—

“ We are permitted no books but such as tend to the weakening and effeminating of the mind. Our natural defects are every way indulged, and it is looked upon as in a degree criminal to improve our reason, or fancy we have any. We are taught to place all our art in adorning our outward forms, and permitted without reproach to carry that custom even to extravagancy, while our minds are entirely neglected, and, by disuse of reflections, filled with nothing but the trifling objects our eyes are daily entertained with.”

One of Lady Mary's accomplishments was peculiar to the age. As soon as she was old enough, her father required her to do the honors of his table. This was no easy task ; for, besides being attentive and courteous to her guests, etiquette demanded that she should carve every dish herself. Not even the master of the house assisted her,—his sole care was to pass the bottle. At that period there were professed carving-masters for ladies. Lady Mary took lessons three times a week.

Lady Mary's most intimate friend and correspondent, as a girl, was Anne Wortley. This young lady was the favorite sister of Edward Wortley Montagu, and through her Lady Mary became intimately acquainted with her future husband. Her love for this friend, as manifested in her letters, is extravagant and exacting, like that of all girls in their first female

friendship. Still these early letters show a brilliant and highly cultivated mind, and, what is more to be valued as not always allied to genius, good common sense. It must be remembered, nevertheless, that her friend's brother saw all her letters, and as it is probable that Lady Mary knew of the fact, we are obliged, from their tone, to suspect her of occasionally writing for effect. In her nineteenth year she discourses thus sensibly to her friend:—

“I am now so much alone, I have leisure to pass whole days in reading, but am not at all proper for so delicate an employment as choosing you books. Your own fancy will better direct you. My study at present is nothing but dictionaries and grammars. I am trying whether it be possible to learn without a master. I am not certain (and dare hardly hope) I shall make any great progress; but I find the study so diverting, I am not only easy, but pleased with the solitude that indulges it. I forget there is such a place as London, and wish for no company but yours. You see, my dear, in making my pleasures consist of these unfashionable diversions, I am not of the number who cannot be happy out of the mode. I believe more follies are committed out of complaisance to the world than in following our own inclinations. Nature is seldom in the wrong, custom always; it is with some regret I follow it in all the impertinences of dress. The compliance is so trivial it comforts me; but I am amazed to see it consulted even in the most important occasions of our lives, and that people of good sense in other things can make their happiness to consist in the opinions of others, and sacrifice everything in the desire of appearing in fashion.”

After the death of Anne Wortley, her brother continued the correspondence with Lady Mary, which now becomes curious as well as interesting. Edward Wortley was evidently a man of character and of culture, but of a very suspicious nature. Though he is fascinated by Lady Mary's beauty and wit, it is plain that he is not happy in his chains. He accuses her of insincerity and a want of generosity; tells her that he should think himself undone if he married her, and that she could not oblige him more than by refusing him. But when she resents his insinuations and reproaches, and gives him the desired dismissal, he begs her to write to him again, and says that he would die to be secure of her heart, and that, were he confident of this, there is nothing he would not do to obtain her. Her replies are charming. It is evident that she

is much disturbed by his doubts, and her feelings fluctuate continually between womanly resentment and warm affection. Finally love is victorious, and after nearly two years' courtship Mr. Wortley lays his suit before her father. Difficulties soon arose in relation to the settlements. Mr. Wortley refused to entail his estate at the suggestion of the Duke, who peremptorily dismissed him, and almost compelled his daughter to marry a man of his selection.

In consequence of these harsh measures, Lady Mary eloped, with the sanction and aid of other members of her family. Her father never fully forgave this act of disobedience, and for many years he permitted no intercourse between her and his other children.

Lady Mary's first letter to her husband after their marriage is very characteristic : —

“ I don't know very well how to begin. I am perfectly unacquainted with a proper matrimonial style. After all, I think 't is best to write as if we were not married at all. I lament your absence, as if you was still my lover; and I am impatient to hear you are got safe to Durham, and that you have fixed a time for your return.

“ I have not been very long in this family; and I fancy myself in that described in the *Spectator*. The good people here look upon their children with a fondness that more than recompenses their care of them. I don't perceive much distinction in regard to their merits; and when they speak sense or nonsense, it affects the parents with almost the same pleasure. My friendship for the mother, and kindness for Miss Biddy, make me endure the squalling of Miss Nanny and Miss Mary with abundance of patience; and my foretelling the future conquests of the eldest daughter makes me very well with the family. I don't know whether you will presently find out that this seeming impertinent account is the tenderest expressions of my love to you, but it furnishes my imagination with agreeable pictures of our future life; and I flatter myself with the hopes of one day enjoying with you the same satisfactions, and that, after as many years together, I may see you retain the same fondness for me as I shall certainly do for you, and the noise of a nursery may have more charms for us than the music of an opera.

“ Amusements such as these are the sure effect of my sincere love, since 't is the nature of that passion to entertain the mind with pleasures in prospect; and I check myself, when I grieve for your absence,

by remembering how much reason I have to rejoice in passing my whole life with you, — a good fortune not to be valued ! I am afraid of telling you that I return thanks for it to Heaven, because you will sharge me with hypocrisy ; but you are mistaken ; I assist every day at public prayers in this family, and never forget, in my private ejaculations, how much I owe to Heaven for making me yours. 'T is candle-light, or I should not conclude so soon.

“ Pray, my love, begin at the top, and read till you come to the bottom.”

This contentment does not seem to have been of long duration. For some years after their marriage, their income was very limited, and they were obliged to live in retirement. Mr. Wortley's frequent and prolonged absences in London were very distasteful to the young wife. She reproaches him for seldom writing ; and, though still warmly attached to him, she appears often dejected and unhappy. She was also very ambitious for him, more so at that time than she was for herself.

“ I am glad,” she writes two years after their marriage, “ you think of serving your friends. I hope it will put you in mind of serving yourself. I need not enlarge upon the advantages of money ; everything we see, and everything we hear, puts us in remembrance of it. If it was possible to restore liberty to your country, or limit the encroachments of the prerogative, by reducing yourself to a garret, I should be pleased to share so glorious a poverty with you ; but as the world is, and will be, 't is a sort of duty to be rich, that it may be in one's power to do good, riches being another word for power, towards the obtaining of which the first necessary qualification is impudence, and, (as Demosthenes said of pronunciation in oratory,) the second is impudence, and the third still impudence. No modest man ever did or ever will make his fortune. Your friend Lord Halifax, R. Walpole, and all other remarkable instances of quick advancement, have been remarkably impudent. The Ministry is like a play at court, — there's a little door to get in, and a great crowd without, shoving and thrusting who shall be foremost ; people who knock others with their elbows, disregard a little kick of the shins, and still thrust heartily forwards, are sure of a good place. Your modest man stands behind in the crowd, is shoved about by everybody, his clothes torn, almost squeezed to death, and sees a thousand get in before him that don't make so good a figure as himself.

“I don’t say it is impossible for an impudent man not to rise in the world ; but a moderate merit with a large share of impudence is more probable to be advanced than the greatest qualifications without it.”

Lady Mary’s counsel to her husband with regard to the accumulation of wealth was too well heeded ; for, as he advanced in life, he was noted for his avarice. Her ambitious hopes for him were also realized. He early distinguished himself in the House of Commons, and was intimately associated with Addison. It is said that he contributed some papers to the *Spectator*. Upon the death of Queen Anne, he was made Lord of the Treasury, and Lady Mary was presented at court, where she became the reigning belle. Two years afterward, in 1716, Mr. Wortley resigned his place in the Ministry, and was appointed Ambassador to the Porte. His wife accompanied him on this mission, and is the third Englishwoman known to have visited Turkey. At that period a journey to Constantinople was considered dangerous, as well as arduous ; and Lady Mary’s courage was deemed as great as her affection for her husband.

Mr. Wortley remained abroad two years, and during that time Lady Mary collected the materials for her famous Turkish letters. It has always been taken for granted, until recently, that these letters were written in nearly their present form to her correspondents ; but Mr. Thomas has concluded, upon a thorough examination of the original manuscripts, that Lady Mary must have corrected and revised them, with the aid of her diary, before giving them away to Mr. Sowden for the purpose of publication. Their style is no more finished than portions of her familiar correspondence ; but, regarded simply as letters of travel, they have hardly been surpassed. Nothing escaped her quick observation, except the beauties of nature. These had few charms for her. As with Dr. Johnson, men and manners alone interested her.

Several of the most amusing of these letters are dated from Vienna, where the embassy was detained some time. They give a very good idea of the Austrian temperament :—

“It is not from Austria that one can write with vivacity, and I am already infected with the phlegm of the country. Even their amours



and their quarrels are carried on with a surprising temper, and they are never lively but upon points of ceremony. There, I own, they show all their passions; and 't is not long since two coaches, meeting in a narrow street at night, the ladies in them, not being able to adjust the ceremonial of which should go back, sat there with equal gallantry till two in the morning; and were both so fully determined to die upon the spot, rather than yield in a point of that importance, that the street would never have been cleared till their deaths, if the Emperor had not sent his guards to part them; and even then they refused to stir till the expedient was found out of taking them both out in chairs exactly at the same moment; after which it was with some difficulty that the *pas* was decided between the two coachmen, no less tenacious of their rank than the ladies.

“Nay, this passion is so omnipotent in the breasts of the women, that even their husbands never die but they are ready to break their hearts because that fatal hour puts an end to their rank, no widows having any place at Vienna. The men are not much less touched with this point of honor; and they do not only scorn to marry, but to make love to any woman of a family not as illustrious as their own; and the pedigree is much more considered by them than either the complexion or features of their mistresses. Happy are the shes that can number among their ancestors Counts of the Empire; they have neither occasion for beauty, money, or good conduct to get them husbands.”

In the last century, if Lady Mary be of authority, youth must have been but little prized in Vienna. She writes: —

“I can assure you that wrinkles, or a small stoop in the shoulders, nay, gray hair itself, is no objection to the making new conquests. I know you cannot easily figure to yourself a young fellow of five-and-twenty ogling my Lady Suffolk with passion, or pressing to lead the Countess of Oxford from an opera. But such are the sights I see every day, and I don't perceive anybody surprised at them but myself. A woman till five-and-thirty is only looked upon as a raw girl, and can possibly make no noise in the world till about forty. I don't know what your Ladyship may think of this matter, but it is considerable comfort to me to know there is upon earth such a paradise for old women; and I am content to be insignificant at present, in the design of returning when I am fit to appear nowhere else.”

Her letters from Turkey, though not quite so piquant, are equally interesting. The languor and indolence incident to an Eastern climate did not affect her in the least. We find

her in Constantinople studying the language, and collecting information as to the manners and customs of the Turks. She procured admission into the harems of many influential persons, though not into the royal seraglio, as has been erroneously reported. Some of her stories of the Turkish ladies are very entertaining. In reference to her proficiency in the Eastern dialects, she writes thus jestingly to one of her correspondents (Lady Rich) : —

“I fancy you are now wondering at my profound learning; but alas! dear madam, I am almost fallen into the misfortune so common to the ambitious, — while they are employed on distant insignificant conquests abroad, a rebellion starts up at home; — I am in great danger of losing my English. I find it is not half so easy for me to write as it was a twelvemonth ago. I am forced to study for expressions, and try to learn my mother tongue. Human understanding is as much limited as human power or human strength. The memory can retain but a certain number of images; and 't is as impossible for one human creature to be perfect master of ten different languages, as to have in perfect subjection ten different kingdoms, or to fight against ten men at a time. I am afraid I shall at last know none as I should do.”

Through the summer, the English embassy remained with the court at Belgrade; and it was there that Lady Mary passed the greater portion of her time. Her residence was pointed out to travellers for many years; but, owing to the frailty of Turkish dwelling-houses, there is not a trace of it left. Lady Mary states, as a reason for the little attention given to the erection of private residences, that, at the death of a proprietor, his dwelling became the property of the Grand Seignior, and very few persons cared to enrich the state to the detriment of their heirs.

Mr. Wortley returned to England in the autumn of 1718. Lady Mary was received with much distinction upon their arrival, the fame of her travels rendering her an object equally of curiosity and of admiration. At the risk of losing this popularity, she began and carried into execution the great work of her life. At Belgrade, she had noticed the custom of inoculating for the small-pox, which was then so terrible and universal a scourge, — its ravages extending as widely among the wealthy and high-born as among the poor. Being fully

convinced of the efficiency of this resource, she tried it successfully upon her own child, and afterward exerted all her influence toward its introduction into England. Her efforts met with the most violent opposition. The clergy denounced it from the pulpit; the medical faculty rose unanimously in arms against it; and the common people were incited to hoot at Lady Mary as an unnatural mother when she appeared in public. Her energy and courage, however, finally triumphed. The project was submitted to the government, and it was first tried upon criminals sentenced to death. Proving successful, the practice gained ground gradually, and, until superseded by Dr. Jenner's discovery, was the sole stay against the spread of the disease. Lady Mary devoted a great deal of her time to this her pet scheme. She had met with such success in her treatment of her own children, that her presence was required on every such occasion by mothers of her own rank; and she cheerfully gave her assistance and advice whenever demanded. She richly deserved a public memorial; but the only recognition of her benevolence and patriotism has been at private hands. In the cathedral at Lichfield a cenotaph is erected to her memory, as an expression of gratitude, by a lady who regarded her as her own preserver.

The first few years after Lady Mary's return were undoubtedly the most brilliant and prosperous of her long life. She was both admired and courted. Her influence in literary circles was immense. Poets and authors solicited her patronage, which she always gave generously, though her judgment upon the publications of her own day was often influenced by personal feelings. She liberally assisted Savage, and was the intimate friend of Fielding, her second-cousin. Pope, too, was still her admirer. Their intimacy began a short time before she left England, and he had corresponded with her during her absence. His letters are far inferior to hers in interest and ability. They are full of vapid compliment and fulsome flattery, and are by no means worthy of so great a poet. Lady Mary passes over his professions of attachment in silence, and vouchsafes to him none in reply, if her published letters can be trusted. Flattered she undoubtedly was by such homage, and she entertains him in return with scraps of Turkish poetry and ancient epigrams.

From her friend, Pope became her most bitter and unscrupulous enemy. The causes assigned for his hostility to her have been many and various. One was, that she wounded him by an epigram upon his deformity ; another, that he was jealous of her friendship with his political foe, Lord Hervey, the nobleman to whom Lady Mary had reference in her often-quoted and witty remark, that "there are only three kinds of people in the world, — men, women, and Herveys." Mr. Thomas thinks it likely that she first offended Pope by a clever parody on the poem "On Two Lovers struck dead by Lightning," which he sent her just before her return to England. This is hardly probable, as it was through Pope's persuasion that the Wortleys settled at Twickenham. It was also out of complaisance to his request that she sat for her portrait to Sir Godfrey Kneller, that strange medley of avarice, vanity, and genius. This portrait was in the possession of her family and never belonged to Pope, as has been reported. On its completion, he composed the well-known poem beginning, —

"The playful smiles around the dimpled mouth."

Pope would never have written so flatteringly of Lady Mary had he been vexed by her parody ; nor could the offence have been given by its subsequent publication, for that occurred after their estrangement. A late writer in one of the English reviews attributes it to a more commonplace cause. Lady Mary had an inveterate habit of borrowing, and continually annoyed Mrs. Pope, who kept house for her son, by her demands. There is a story afloat that she even borrowed sheets, and, after keeping them for an unconscionable length of time, returned them unwashed. Such negligence and inconsiderateness kept Mrs. Pope in a state of constant irritation ; and as her son was devotedly attached to his mother, her annoyances doubtless affected him also, and finally led to a rupture. Lady Mary's own account is very different. She states that "at some ill-chosen time, when she least expected what romancers call a declaration, he made such passionate love to her as, in spite of her utmost endeavors to be angry and look

grave, provoked an immoderate fit of laughter, from which moment he became her implacable enemy."

It is a little singular that Dr. Johnson, in his life of the poet, makes no mention of his passion for Lady Mary. He refers to their enmity once, and then only in relation to Pope's intimacy and capriciousness with Lord Oxford. He says: "The table was indeed infested by Lady Mary Wortley, who was the friend of Lady Oxford, and who, knowing his peevishness, could by no entreaties be restrained from contradicting him, till their disputes were sharpened to such asperity that one or the other quitted the house." What the great Doctor thought of Lady Mary's character is very apparent from the significant use of the word *infested*.

Her conduct toward Pope was probably very irritating, but still there is no excuse for his incessant malignity. He abused her so unmistakably in his imitations of the first satire of the second book of Horace, under the name of Sappho, that she and Lord Hervey, who had also been attacked, determined to be revenged. They composed jointly a severe retort, ending with these lines:—

"Then whilst with coward hand you stab a name,  
And try at least to assassinate our fame,  
Like the first bold assassin's be thy lot,  
Ne'er be thy guilt forgiven or forgot;  
But as thou hat'st, be hated by mankind,  
And with the emblem of thy crooked mind  
Marked on thy back, like Cain, by God's own hand,  
Wander, like him, accursed through the land."

The poet and satirist had certainly no claim upon their forbearance, but the deformed man had many claims; and no provocation can justify these cruel and cowardly allusions. Neither Lord Hervey nor Lady Mary was a match for Pope; and they paid dearly for their revenge, for he became only more violent and acrimonious, and his assaults were not easily parried.

Pope was not Lady Mary's only enemy. Before she left England again, she became universally unpopular; and she verified in her case the truth of the saying, "Wit is a dangerous thing in a woman." Gifted with rare talents, beautiful,

high-born, and accomplished, it would seem as though she possessed everything to make life enjoyable. But though in some respects a prosperous, she was far from being a happy woman. Her very capabilities proved her bane; and, notwithstanding her fame, her lot was not enviable. Brilliant and witty, her acute penetration and lively sense of the ridiculous gave too sharp an edge to her satire. In her sallies she spared neither friend nor foe; and as but few of her associates dared enlist against her in the war of wit, success rendered her only the more regardless of the feelings of others. A characteristic anecdote of her recklessness is given by Lady Louisa Stuart. Lady Rich, a former friend and correspondent of Lady Mary, affected, as she advanced in years, great juvenility in manner and dress. On one occasion, when they were in company together, some allusion was made to the Master of the Rolls. He was old Sir Joseph Jekyll, "who never changed his principles or his wig," and who had held the office so long, that he was identified with it. "Pray, who is the Master of the Rolls?" said Lady Rich, in an innocent tone. "Sir Humphrey Monnoux, Madam," answered Lady Mary, naming off-hand the most unlikely person she could think of. The company laughed, and the lady looked disconcerted; but, not daring to betray her better knowledge by disputing the fact, she went on in desperation, making herself still more ridiculous. "Well, I am vastly ashamed of being so prodigiously ignorant. I dare say I ask a mighty silly question, but pray, now, what is it to be Master of the Rolls? What does he do? for I really don't know." "Why, Madam, he superintends all the French rolls that are baked in London, and without him you would have no bread-and-butter for your breakfast." There was no parrying this. Lady Rich colored, flirted her fan, and professed herself unable to cope with Lady Mary in wit. She had no wit. "Nay, but look you, my dear Madam; I grant it a very fine thing to continue always fifteen, — that everybody must approve of; it is quite fair. But, indeed — indeed one need not be five years old."

Such repartees increased the number of her enemies; yet it is strange that Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, who could bear no rebuke even from royalty, and who quarrelled with all

her relations, not only endured Lady Mary's impertinences, but remained her firm friend during her life. Very few of her other friends were so magnanimous. She alienated them by her sarcasms, and they also dreaded her pen even more than her tongue. Satirical epigrams and lampoons were the fashion of the day. Swift and Pope had set the example to all the inferior wits, and Lady Mary also, infected by the mischievous spirit, made every silly story the subject of ridicule and satire in verse. Addison, in one of the early papers of the *Spectator*, alludes to the prevalence of this custom, and gravely and earnestly censures it. Lampoons and satires that are written with wit and spirit he likens to "poisonous darts, which not only inflict a wound, but are incurable." Lady Mary herself suffered severely from these dubious pleasantries, and many abusive sonnets were attributed to her of which she was entirely innocent. Her indiscretions also were trenchant weapons in the hands of her enemies. Numerous stories were circulated to her disadvantage; but most of them would have probably died away like all idle rumors that have little or no foundation, had not Horace Walpole, the great scandal-monger of his age, been at the pains to record the most scandalous. He took the same delight in retailing gossip, that he did in collecting old relics and articles of *virtu*. Macaulay, in a keen and skilful dissection of his character, applies to him Hero's charge against Beatrice:—

"So turns she every man the wrong side out,  
And never gives to truth and virtue that  
Which simpleness and merit purchaseth."

Lady Mary and Horace Walpole's mother were contemporaries, and hated each other cordially. As he was strongly attached to his mother, this fact may account for his persistent animosity toward her enemy. He met Lady Mary at Florence, and described her as "old, ugly, dirty, tawdry, and avaricious." She was not aware of his dislike; for in a letter to her daughter she mentions having met Mr. Walpole, and adds that he was particularly civil to her. His scandalous stories to Lady Mary's prejudice, however, have been fully refuted by Lord Wharncliffe, and also by Mr. Thomas, her last biographer.

In 1739, Lady Mary left England and remained abroad twenty-two years. Declining health was the reason assigned for her departure, and in a letter to a friend she speaks of Mr. Wortley's intention to join her as soon as Parliamentary business would permit. They never met again; but it is evident from her letters that they separated on good terms. She writes to him from Dover, and again at Calais, entering upon all the little details of her journey. Mrs. Jameson, in her sketch of Lady Mary, speaks of her marriage "ending in disgust and aversion, which after their separation subsided into good-humored indifference." There is not the slightest hint of such a state of feeling either in the memoirs or her own letters. She speaks of her husband always kindly, when addressing Lady Bute, and on one occasion she says: "It has been my interest and duty to study his character, and I can say with truth I never knew any man so capable of a generous action." They corresponded during his life, and Mr. Wortley seems to have scrupulously fulfilled all her commissions. He also made her the medium of his transactions with his unworthy son, which he certainly would not have done had they not been on amicable terms. Indifferent to each other they undoubtedly were, but there is no evidence of a worse feeling. Her letters to him are kind. She evinces a polite interest in his health, though hardly an affectionate solicitude. During her early married life she was tenderly attached to him, and she often reproaches him for his coldness. Probably his neglect chilled her affection, and contributed toward making her the worldly woman she became. Lady Mary's eccentricities and unfeminine habits, however, account for much of Mr. Wortley's indifference. Mrs. Jameson also alludes to some verses written by Lady Mary to her husband, and preserved by Disraeli, which express the "utmost bitterness of female scorn." So many lampoons were attributed to Lady Mary which she never wrote, that the genuineness of these lines may be doubted. She often complained bitterly of the injustice she suffered in this respect. From her retirement in Italy she wrote to her daughter on the subject. "I do not believe ever Job or Socrates had such provocation. . . . I have seen things I have written so mangled and falsified, I have



scarce known them. I have seen poems I never read published with my name at length, and others that were truly and singly written by me printed under the name of others."

Lady Mary's constant correspondent while abroad was her daughter, Lady Bute, though she wrote occasionally to Mr. Wortley, Lady Oxford, and other friends. Lady Bute seems to have been as much the comfort and honor of her parents as their son was their disgrace. He was weak and profligate, and was finally disowned by them. Their daughter married advantageously, and, if we may judge of her character from her mother's letters, she was a dutiful child and good wife. She never involved herself in any of Lady Mary's quarrels, but, happy in her own home, found there the peace which had been forfeited by her more gifted mother. Lady Mary, in one of her letters to Mr. Wortley, says: "What I think extraordinary is my daughter's continuing so many years agreeable to Lord Bute, Mr. Mackenzie telling me, the last time I saw him, that his brother frequently said among his companions that he was still as much in love with his wife as before he married her." What a significant comment this upon her own matrimonial experience, and of the society in which she had moved so many years!

After travelling through Italy, Lady Mary selected Brescia as a permanent residence. At Lovere, where she passed her summers, she amused herself with the superintendence of her vineyards; but disgust and satiety, even more than her ill-health, had evidently banished her from England. Her letters to Lady Bute are affectionate and entertaining; but her cheerfulness, to borrow her own simile, is "like the fire kindled in brushwood, which makes a show, but is soon burned to cold ashes." "I have passed a long life," she writes, "and may say with truth, have endeavored to purchase friends; accident has put it into my power to confer great benefits, yet I never met with any return, nor indeed any true affection, but from dear Lady Oxford, who owed me nothing." "I have long thought myself useless to the world. I have seen one generation pass away, and it is gone, and I think there are a very few left who flourished in my youth." "I believe, like all others of your age, you have been long convinced there is no real

happiness to be found or expected in this world. You have seen a court near enough to know neither riches nor power can secure it, and all human endeavors after felicity are as childish as running after sparrows to lay salt on their tails."

But Lady Mary's vicissitudes, though they had sobered her spirit, did not soften her character. While she admits the insufficiency of earthly pursuits and enjoyments, she does not seek higher and truer pleasures. The world that she affected to despise was still her idol, and though professing belief in and respect for Christianity, she was far from being a religious woman. When Lady Bute was suffering from the loss of her son, she endeavors to console her with worldly advice.

"Disappointments," she says, "ought to be less sensible at my age than at yours; yet I own I am so far affected by this that I have need of all my philosophy to support it. However, let me beg of you not to indulge in useless grief to the prejudice of your health, which is so necessary to your family. We see so darkly into futurity, we never know when we have a real cause to rejoice or lament. . . . Do not give way to melancholy; seek amusements; be willing to be diverted, and insensibly you will become so. Weak people only place a merit in affliction. A grateful remembrance, and whatever honor we can pay to their memory, is all that is owing to the dead. Tears and sorrow are no duties to them, and make us incapable of those we owe to the living."

This advice may be sound philosophy, but certainly is not very comforting to a mother in the first bitter hours of a bereavement. Lady Mary's counsels to Lady Bute upon the education of her children are most excellent, when we consider the rank of those children and the prejudices of the age.

"I wish your daughters to resemble me in nothing but the love of reading, knowing by experience how far it is capable of softening the cruellest accidents of life; even the happiest cannot be passed over without many uneasy hours, and there is no remedy so easy as books, which, if they do not give cheerfulness, at least restore quiet to the most troubled mind."

"It is a saying of Thucydides, ignorance is bold, and knowledge reserved. Indeed, it is impossible to be far advanced in it, without being more humbled by a conviction of human ignorance, than elated by learning. At the same time I recommend books, I neither exclude work nor drawing. I think it as scandalous for a woman not to know how to use a needle, as for a man not to know how to use a sword."

“If your daughters are inclined to love reading, do not check their inclination by hindering them of the diverting part of it; it is as necessary for the amusement of women as the reputation of men; but teach them not to expect or desire any applause from it. Let their brothers shine, and let them content themselves with making their lives easier by it, which I experimentally know is more effectually done by study than any other way. Ignorance is as much the fountain of vice as idleness, and indeed generally produces it. People that do not read or work for a livelihood have many hours they know not how to employ, especially women who fall in vapors or something worse.”

“No entertainment is as cheap as reading, nor any pleasure so lasting. Your daughter will not want new fashions, nor regret the loss of expensive diversions or variety of company, if she can be amused with an author in her closet. To render this amusement complete, she should be permitted to learn the languages. I have heard it lamented that boys lose so many years in mere learning of words; this is no objection to a girl, whose time is not so precious; she cannot advance herself in any profession, and has therefore more hours to spare; and as you say her memory is good, she will be very agreeably employed this way. There are two cautions to be given on this subject: first, not to think herself learned when she can read Latin, or even Greek. Languages are more properly to be called vehicles of learning, than learning itself, as may be observed in many schoolmasters, who, though critics in grammar, are the most ignorant fellows upon earth. True knowledge consists in knowing things, not words. I would wish her no further a linguist, than to enable her to read books in their originals, that are often corrupted, and are always injured by translations. . . . . The second caution to be given her (and which is most absolutely necessary) is to conceal whatever learning she attains with as much solicitude as she would hide crookedness or lameness; the parade of it can only serve to draw on her the envy, and consequently the most inveterate hatred, of all he and she fools, which will certainly be at least three parts in four of all her acquaintance.”

Mr. Wortley died in 1761. Business matters requiring the presence of Lady Mary, she at last yielded to the earnest solicitations of her daughter, and returned to England. Her appearance is thus described by Horace Walpole:—

“Lady Mary Wortley is arrived; I have seen her; I think her avarice, her dirt, and her vivacity are all increased. Her dress, like her languages, is a galimatias of several countries. . . . . She needs no

cap, no handkerchief, no gown, no petticoat, no shoes. An old black-laced hood represents the first; the fur of a horseman's coat, which replaces the third, serves for the second; a dimity petticoat is deputy, and officiates for the fourth; and slippers act the part of the last."

This account is probably exaggerated, yet contains the elements of truth. Lady Mary had long lost her beauty, and her untidiness, even before she left England, was notorious, and had been satirized by Pope. Three years before Mr. Wortley's death, she acknowledged that it was eleven years since she had seen her figure in a glass, and that the last reflection she saw there was so disagreeable, that she had resolved to spare herself such mortification in future. This resolution accounts for much that was fantastic in her appearance.

She was not contented in England; foreign habits had become a second nature, and it is probable that she would have again gone abroad had not her disease — a cancer, with which for years she had been battling in secret — now assumed a more menacing aspect. She died in the arms of Lady Bute, August, 1762.

Lady Mary left a diary, portions of which Lady Bute was in the habit of reading to her children; but upon her death it was destroyed by her orders. Much interesting material was consequently lost to the world; but prudential motives probably induced Lady Bute to suppress it. Lady Mary recorded and commented upon all the scandalous stories of the day, and the publication of such records would have caused infinite mischief. We see the pernicious effects of indiscreet disclosures in our own age, in the recriminations and heart-burnings caused by the publication of Humboldt's letters. They have not only done much harm to the living, but have materially injured the character of Humboldt himself. Lady Mary's diary would probably have had the same effect.

Her poems are more clever than poetical. The Town Eclogues are parodies on the pastorals of Pope and Philips. Literature with her was simply a pastime. Had she pursued it as a profession, there is no doubt that she would have been entirely successful as an author. As it is, her literary fame must rest entirely upon her letters. In elegance and grace they rival those of Madame de Sévigné, while they far surpass

them in freshness, wit, and originality. The descriptions of Lady Mary never fatigue, while Madame de Sévigné's are often wearisome. The former, in a letter to her sister, Lady Mar, says: "The last pleasure that fell in my way was Madame de Sévigné's letters; very pretty they are, but I assert, without the least vanity, that mine will be full as entertaining forty years hence. I advise you therefore to put none of them to the use of waste paper." Lady Mary modified her opinion, however, very considerably; for thirty-one years later she says to her daughter: "How many readers and admirers has Madame de Sévigné, who only gives us, in a lively manner, fashionable phrases, mean sentiments, vulgar prejudices, and endless repetitions." Lady Mary could not appreciate the tender, affectionate nature of Madame de Sévigné, and thus the peculiar charm of her correspondence was lost upon her. The characters of these rival letter-writers contrast strikingly, while some circumstances of their lives are very similar. Both were court beauties and belles. The husband of the one was indifferent, while that of the other was profligate. The sons of both caused their parents great anxiety, while their daughters were their pride and comfort. But here the parallel ceases. The seductions of the most brilliant of French courts rendered Madame de Sévigné's virtues only the more conspicuous. Left early in life a widow, she mourned sincerely for her dissipated husband, and, rejecting all the allurements of a society she adorned, devoted herself to the care and education of her children. The kindest of friends and the most tender of mothers, she suffered only through her affections, and in all her trials her childlike faith and trust in God were her solace and support. The world, on the contrary, had spoiled Lady Mary, and her vanity was more frequently wounded than her heart.

The great affliction of Madame de Sévigné's life was her separation from her daughter, and she thus touchingly alludes to it: —

"There is not a spot, not a place, either in the house or at church, where I have not seen you, and there is nothing which does not recall you. You are my only thought; my mind and my heart seek you, but in vain I turn, in vain I search; this dear child, whom I love with so

much passion, is two hundred miles from me. She is mine no longer, and I weep without restraint. This is very weak, but I cannot wrestle against a tenderness so just and so natural."

Lady Mary consoled herself for a voluntary exile from her daughter by more philosophic reflections.

"How often I fancy to myself the pleasure I should take in seeing you in the midst of the little people, and how severe do I then think my destiny that denies me that pleasure. I endeavor to console myself by reflecting that we should certainly have perpetual disputes, if not quarrels, concerning the management of them; the affection of a grandmother has generally a tincture of dotage; you would say I spoil them, and perhaps not be much in the wrong."

Lady Mary often wrote for display. To amuse her daughter, and to express the yearnings of an overflowing love, were the sole objects of Madame de Sévigné's letters. They are the unaffected utterances of her heart. The fame of both will probably be lasting. The one will be esteemed for her sweet, womanly qualities, even more than for her intellectual endowments, while the other must be respected for her genius, no less than honored as a public benefactor.

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ART. II. — *Voyage dans la Cilicie et dans les Montagnes du Taurus, exécuté pendant les Années 1852, 1853. Par Ordre de l'Empereur et sous les Auspices du Ministre de l'Instruction Publique et de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres.* Par VICTOR LANGLOIS. A Paris: Chez Benjamin Duprat, Libraire de l'Institut et de la Bibliothèque Impériale et du Sénat, des Sociétés Asiatiques de Paris et Londres. 1861. 8vo. pp. 494.

IN the month of December, 1851, just after that daring act of arbitrary violence by which the President of the French Republic became virtually the autocrat of the French realm, it occurred to the shrewd thought of M. Victor Langlois that an audience at court, and a little timely adulation of the new